

Southampton County Public Schools

LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY

PARENT & FAMILY ENGAGEMENT POLICY

Adopted June 2007/Revised May 2018 for ESSA Compliance

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PART I. GENERAL EXPECTATIONS AND OBJECTIVES

The Southampton County Public Schools agrees to implement the following statutory requirements:

- A. Involve parents and family members** in jointly developing the local educational agency's Title I, Part A plan under section 1112, and the development of school support and improvement plans under section 1111(d).
- B. Provide the coordination, technical assistance, and other support necessary** to assist and build the capacity of all participating schools within the LEA in planning and implementing effective parent and family involvement activities. These activities must improve student academic achievement and school performance, which may include meaningful consultation with employers, business leaders, and philanthropic organizations, or individuals with expertise in effectively engaging parents and family members in education;
- C. Coordinate and integrate** parent and family engagement strategies to the extent feasible and appropriate, with other relevant Federal, State, and local laws and programs;
- D. Conduct**, with the meaningful involvement of parents and family members, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of the parent and family engagement policy in improving the academic quality of all schools served under this part, including identifying—
 - Barriers to greater participation by parents/families in activities authorized by this section (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background);
 - The needs of parents and family members to assist with the learning of their children, including engaging with school personnel and teachers; and
 - Strategies to support successful school and family interactions;
- E. Use the findings of such evaluation** to design evidence-based strategies for more effective parental and family engagement, and to revise, if necessary, the parent and family engagement policies described in this section; and
- F. Involve parents in the activities of the schools**, which may include establishing a parent advisory board comprised of a sufficient number and representative group of parents or family members served by the LEA to adequately represent the needs of the population. This advisory board will help develop, revise, and review the parent and family engagement policy.

PART II. DESCRIPTION OF HOW DISTRICT WILL IMPLEMENT REQUIRED DISTRICT WIDE PARENTAL INVOLVEMENT POLICY COMPONENTS

Involving Parents in Decision Making and Planning

1. The **Southampton County Public Schools District** will take the following actions to involve parents in the joint development of its district wide family engagement/Parental Involvement Policy under section 1112 of the ESEA:
 - At least one representative from each of the three Title I Schoolwide Schools will serve as a representative on the District/Parent Advisory Council. The majority of DAC members are parents with students in the program; however, other interested grandparents and community members are also invited to participate.
 - The District/Parent Advisory Council is composed of four or more members.
 - The Title I Coordinator will meet with the District/Parent Advisory Council.
 - The Title I Parent/Community Liaison will be a member of the District/Parent Advisory Council.
 - The DAC will meet at least twice a year to review/revise the current district family engagement/parental involvement policy and any other and family engagement activities in improving the academic quality of Title I schools and any other required informational documents. Additional meetings will be held at the school level.
 - Parents will be informed and involved in the development and review of the Title I application; with emphasis in decisions about how the funds reserved for parental involvement activities will be used.
 - The LEA will conduct a parent survey that solicits input (feed-back/suggestions) from all parents in Title I schools of the content and effectiveness of parent/family engagement activities as well as suggestions on topics of interest for parent workshops.

2. The **Southampton County Public School District** will take the following actions to involve parents in the process of school review under section 1116 of the ESEA:
 - Two or more parents will serve on each Title I school's Schoolwide Planning Committee
 - The committee (which established the schoolwide plan) will review and revise the plan annually.
 - The Schoolwide Planning Committees will meet at least two times a year.
 - The data from each school's SOL tests, Flanagan Tests for Higher Standards/Benchmark Testing, six-week tests, PALS (Pre-K-3), QRIs, attendance records and behavioral referrals will be used to review and revise the schoolwide plan and Title I application.

3. The **Southampton County Public School District** will provide the following necessary coordination, technical assistance, and other support to assist Title I, Part A schools in planning and implementing effective parental involvement activities to improve student academic achievement and school performance:
 - There will be an informative meeting in the fall at each Title I school. The Title I Coordinator (or representative) will attend these meetings and inform parents about the school's participation in Title I, Part A programs.
 - The Title I Coordinator (or representative) will help parents understand the following topics to help them become equal partners with educators in improving their children's academic achievement; the parental involvement requirements of section 1118:

- The State’s academic content standards and State student academic achievement standards
- State and local academic assessments, including alternative assessments and expected level of proficiency
- Their right to be involved in the education of their child: volunteer in their school/classrooms and/or on school/district level advisory committees
- Their “Right-To-Know”/request information about their child’s teacher and paraprofessional qualification
- How to monitor their child’s progress and work with educators to improve the achievement of their child
- How to locate resources both in the county as well as on the VDOE website that will help them to work with their child at home on mastering state standards
- The Title I Parent/Community Liaison will provide the Title I schools with copies of grade level state standards to be distributed to each family Title I Fall Annual Parent Meeting. Appropriate grade-level SOL objectives will be sent home to the families not attending.
- The Title I Parent/Community Liaison will stay informed of current scientific research concerning activities that parents and other caregivers can do to enable their child/children to improve student academic achievement and school performance.
- The Title I Parent/Community Liaison will present information on research based resources, materials and practices at parent, teacher and/or community workshops.
- The Title I Coordinator and Parent/Community Liaison will conduct monthly meetings for the Title I schools’ reading specialist/s to provide technical assistance on planning, organizing and/or providing informative materials for their parent functions/workshops.
- The Title I Parent/Community Liaison will assist Title I Schools with materials and information on SOL Tests and test taking strategies to be presented at parent workshops.

4. The Southampton County Public School District will coordinate and integrate parental involvement strategies in Title I Part A with parental involvement strategies under the following other programs: Head Start, Blackwater Regional Libraries, local foundations, Homeless/Virginia Preschool Initiative/Pre-K/ECSE, Social Services, Health Department, Smart Beginnings Western Tidewater, Southampton Memorial Hospital, and each school’s PTA/PTO by:

- Writing Grants to make funds available from community sources to fund materials for early literacy parent workshops.
- Organizing venue, food, announcements, and materials for parent workshops.
- Notifying the local newspaper of parent events.
- Organizing teachers to present information/methods for parents to work with their children at home.
- Work with Blackwater Regional Library to conduct family events.
- Presenting multimedia workshops for parents.
- Providing early literacy materials to be delivered to identified parents who are unable to participate in the workshops.
- Working with Smart Beginnings Western Tidewater to provide Books for Babies.
- Invite Head Start and SBWT to participate in parent workshops for Pre-K & Kindergarten programs.
- Coordinating events with the PTA/PTO to maximize results of parent effort.
- Meeting with Social Services, Health Department designee/s and Homeless/Foster Liaison to coordinate services (workshops/materials) for families of economically disadvantaged children, foster and/or homeless students, including preschool children.

5. The **Southampton County Public School District** will take the following actions to conduct, with the involvement of parents, an annual evaluation of the content and effectiveness of this parental involvement policy in improving the quality of its Title I, Part A schools. The evaluation will include identifying barriers to greater participation by parents in parental involvement activities (with particular attention to parents who are economically disadvantaged, are disabled, have limited English proficiency/ELs, have limited literacy, or are of any racial or ethnic minority background). The school district will use the findings of the evaluation about its parental involvement policy and activities to design strategies for more effective parental involvement, and to revise, if necessary (and with the involvement of parents) its parental involvement/family engagement policies (school and district). The following actions will be taken:

- The Parent/District Advisory Council (DAC) will review/revise the evaluation instrument. The focus of the evaluation instrument focuses on ways to identify barriers to parent participation as time, location, language or transportation as well as requesting input into the effectiveness of the parent activities and the services that Title I provide their children.
- The Parent/Community Liaison will make copies of the instrument for each family and assure their delivery to the Title I schools.
- The building principal with the help of the school reading specialist will be responsible for distribution and collection of the evaluation instrument. As per suggestion from the DAC, the surveys will be collected by the Reading Specialists and may be anonymous.
- The evaluation instrument will be sent home to each family in February of each year.
- Time will be allotted at each Title I school's PTA/PTO to discuss parent ideas/concerns.
- The results of the survey will be compiled by the Title I Parent/Community Liaison and presented to the District Advisory Council at the subsequent meeting in May and results considered in the revision of the next year's Parent Involvement/Family Engagement policies (school and district) and plans for Title I Part A application.
- The results of the survey will be distributed to each principal/schoolwide planning committee (which includes parents) to be considered in the revision of each Title I school's Schoolwide Plan, component # 3: "Strategies to increase parental involvement" and Parental Involvement Policies (both school and district levels).
- Each principal will inform the Parent/Community Liaison if there is a need for translation of the evaluation instrument for EL parents.
- Each principal will inform the Parent/Community Liaison if there is a need for oral communications of the evaluation instrument for parents with limited literacy skills.

Building Parent Capacity to Improve Their Children's Academic Achievement

1. The **Southampton County Public School District** will build the schools' and parent's capacity for strong parental involvement, in order to ensure effective involvement of parents and to support a partnership among the school involved, parents, and the community to improve student academic achievement, through the following activities specifically described below:

- A. The school district will, with the assistance of its Title I, Part A schools, provide assistance to parents of children served by the school district or school, as appropriate, in understanding topics such as the following;
- the State's academic content standards,
 - the State's student academic achievement standards,
 - the State and local academic assessments including alternate assessments,

- the requirements of Title I Part A
- how to monitor their child's progress
- how to work with educators
- good study habits
- scientific research findings/practices that have been proven to increase academic achievement and student success
- transition from preschool to kindergarten
- transition from elementary to secondary
- opportunities for parental involvement in school by undertaking the actions described below:
 - Distribution of the State's academic content standards to local public libraries.
 - Distribution of the State's academic K-1 standards to local day-care centers.
 - Workshops for parents on listed topics and topics they request.
 - Workshops for caregivers/daycare workers.
 - PowerPoint© presentations for parents and caregivers on listed /requested topics.
 - Attendance by Parent/Community Liaison at workshops sponsored by the VSRA or SEA on ways to increase parental involvement.
 - Attendance by Parent/Community Liaison at conferences and workshops sponsored by the U. S. Department of Education; Title I, on parent involvement.

B. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools, provide materials and training to help parents work with their children to improve their children's academic achievement, such as literacy training, and using technology, as appropriate, to foster parental involvement, by:

- Providing at least 3 workshops for parents on the importance of early literacy.
- Providing parents with easy activities that they can do at home with their child/children that would accelerate literacy learning and overall lifelong learning potential.
- Providing parents with the materials that they can use at home with their child/children and demonstrating their use.
- Providing materials for the *"Books-by-Mail" Summer Reading Program*
- Integrating into the workshops the topics that the National Reading Panel has determined fosters literacy: phonemic awareness, phonics, comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. Writing will also be emphasized.
- Hosting "Family Reading Nights" at each Title I school in which parents help their child/children read an Accelerated Reader® book and take the corresponding test on the computer.
- Conducting a parent survey for workshop topics or interest to parents
- Hosting technology workshops for parents in which they explore sites on the internet that would provide resources for helping their child/children at home.

C. The school district will, with the assistance of its schools and parents, educate its teachers, pupil services personnel, principals and other staff, in how to reach out to, communicate with, and work with parents as equal partners, in the value and utility of contributions of parents, and in how to implement and coordinate parent programs and build ties between parents and schools, by:

- Providing workshops for teachers, school support staff, principals and other staff at each of the Title I schools on the importance/effectiveness of parent involvement and practices that increase parental involvement.
- Working in cooperation with PTA/PTO members for planning and implementing the school staff workshops.

D. The school district will, to the extent feasible and appropriate, coordinate and integrate parental involvement programs and activities with Head Start and public preschool and other programs, and conduct other activities, such as parent resource centers, that encourage and support parents in more fully participating in the education of their children, by:

- Purchasing and organizing materials, including consumables, for parents in the parent resource center that will help them work with their children at home to master state standards
- Advertising the “Parent Resource Center” during coordinated events
- Working with Smart Beginnings Western Tidewater to coordinate and integrate parental involvement activities with Head Start and other public/private preschools
- Arranging with parents a means of obtaining these resources that would alleviate barriers such as sending requested/suggested materials home by the students or delivering them to the home.
- Working with local libraries to coordinate with their Summer Reading Program; like AR

E. The school district will take the following actions to ensure that information related to the school and parent programs, meetings, and other activities, is sent to the parents of participating children in an understandable and uniform format, including alternative formats upon request, and, to the extent practicable, in a language the parents can understand:

- All written communications to parents will be previewed by the principal for accuracy and clarity.
- All announcements of school events will be produced on the computer using a clear font in simple and explicit language.
- Announcements will be sent out in a timely manner.
- When practical, parents will be sent the initial announcement and a reminder.
- Announcements will be translated into an alternative language and sent to EL parents, if need arises and to the extent practical.

PART III. ADOPTION

This LEA’s Parental and Family Engagement Policy has been developed jointly with, and agreed on with, parents of children participating in Title I, Part A programs, as evidenced by Agenda and Minutes from the June 12, 2007 Title I DAC Meeting. The limited revisions are evidenced by the minutes from the May 28, 2018 DAC Meeting. These are the first changes made to the policy since 2007 and are the result of the ESSA. Annual review/revisions will be evidenced in the minutes from the Spring DAC meeting each year.

This policy was adopted by the Southampton County School District on June 12, 2007 with revisions on 5/28/2018 to comply with ESSA changes. This policy will be in effect beginning September 2018. The LEA will distribute this policy to all parents of participating Title I, Part A children on or before October 31, 2018 this year and October 31 for each consecutive year thereafter.